

Unemployment Assistance

In an ordinary rest home a person pays for his or her keep. In these rest homes, or these convalescent homes, or homes similar to those referred to by the hon. member for Lanark and the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre, ordinarily the individual pays; but apparently there are some institutions in existence in which people who are not sick, mentally afflicted, or do not have tuberculosis and the like, may be placed, and payment is made either by the province or by the municipality. Will the minister outline under what legislation provision is made for such an arrangement, because on the face of it these two sections look as incomprehensible as faulty draftsmanship could possibly achieve.

Mr. Martin: Well, I think I can understand the feeling of my hon. friend in the matter, but it may be because of dealing with this thing more regularly that I feel it is not as difficult as my hon. friend says. I shall do my best to explain the situation again. My hon. friend has directed our attention to clause 4, subclause 2(a), which reads:

Except as provided in subsection (3), an agreement shall, for the purposes of this act, exclude from unemployment assistance costs—

Then paragraph (a) is set out, and that is the one he dealt with. It reads:

(a) payments made to or on behalf of persons who are inmates of any institution or class of institution maintained in whole or in part out of funds provided by Canada, a province, a municipality or a charitable organization.

The people in that group are out, so far as this act is concerned.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Right.

Mr. Martin: So far my hon. friend and I are in accord?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Yes.

Mr. Martin: My hon. friend then says, "Look at subclause 3," which reads:

An agreement may include as unemployment assistance costs

(a) payments made to or on behalf of persons who are inmates of homes for special care—

The words "special care" are to be underlined.

—and who would not normally be cared for—

This is descriptive.

—and who would not normally be cared for in general, acute, chronic or convalescent hospitals, tuberculosis sanatoria, mental institutions, institutions for incurables, orphanages or child welfare institutions.

The group of institutions that are described after the words "who would not normally be cared for," etc., are institutions that are maintained by the province. My hon. friend spoke

of chronic cases. They would be covered, for instance, under the hospital insurance proposal as a hospital that would qualify the patients therein for the benefits of the hospital insurance program as is now the case in British Columbia. But my hon. friend says, "That may be true; that may be all well and good," and he says the thing that concerns him is what we mean by "homes for special care". Now, if he will look at clause 4, subclause 4—

Mr. Diefenbaker: I know that.

Mr. Martin: —he will see where the words "homes for special care" are defined. They are defined as meaning:

... nursing homes, hostels for indigent transients, homes for the aged, poorhouses, almshouses and hostel facilities provided for the aged within housing projects constructed under the National Housing Act.

The hon. member asked me to give him examples of these institutions.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Could I interrupt for just a moment. Would these nursing homes, hospitals and homes for the aged and so on be nursing homes, etc., operated by the province?

Mr. Martin: Not necessarily, no.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Well—

Mr. Martin: If my hon. friend wishes to listen to me I think he will follow this. For instance, there are Salvation Army hospitals all over the country. There is a Union Mission here in Ottawa, and there are homes for the aged. In New Brunswick I think they call them poorhouses or homes for the poor.

Mr. Gillis: Yes.

Mr. Martin: People in those institutions are not in hospitals. They are individuals who sometimes are destitute for one reason or another, but they do not need regular hospital care and they are people for whom the hospital is not prepared to provide assistance. That is the type of person who is covered. In every province there is a licensing inspection system under which they license (a) hospitals and (b) nursing homes. We accept the provincial definitions, and if we were to define "nursing homes" ourselves we would run counter to the definitions prescribed in provincial acts in all the provinces. Those are defined.

The hon. member for Comox-Alberni mentioned a possible complication. He mentioned that there might be an individual in one of these nursing homes who was indeed a chronic case. If that happened to be the situation the proper governing authority would see to it that he was provided for in an institution covered by the hospital insurance act in the province of British Columbia; but